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Subject:

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Friday, December 12, 2003 10:51 AM
adoptionregs@state.gov
Hague Adoption Convention parts 96 and parts 98

Docket number State/AR-01/96 for Part 96 or State/AR-01/98 for Part 98

U.S. Department of State:

My name is Traci Rodgers from Charlotte, NC. My sister has been involved in the International Adoption process for 13 months now. She is currently attempting to adopt a little girl from Tajikistan. This child will be her 6th referral. She began the process with Guatemala as her chosen country. But, then there were problems with the Hague Convention between Guatemala and the United States, not to mention the unstable economic conditions and rioting. She switched countries to Russia. After several referrals there, she was in the process of adopting a little girl, Victoria and we were approximately two weeks away from traveling to pick her up when a Russian couple went to Victoria's adoption agency and adopted her. Of course, she went to that family because they were the same nationality.

After our family recovered from the heartbreak of that loss, she decided to keep pursuing the adoption process. The reason she wants to adopt (and why I imagine lots of people choose to adopt) is to love another human being (orphan) and affect their life since they may not have the same opportunities and freedoms that Americans have been given. We all would like to save a child from a fate where countrymen would rather they die than be adopted and loved by American parents. I am so fortunate and blessed by God to be born in this country; in fact, we all are fortunate and God-blessed to be living in the United States. The tragic national events of the last few years have illustrated how lucky we are.

So, in the waiting process, a little girl from Tajikistan has become available. Her name is Manizha. The Republic of Tajikistan has become very unstable and there are many issues with that country right now. The adoption process is on hold due to some comments by the countrymen of Tajikistan that would rather the children die than be adopted by any American family. Yet, the United States government is providing over \$20 million in aid to the Republic of Tajikistan (including food aid), and I, as a taxpayer and law-abiding citizen, am outraged by our government's support of such a lawless state as the Republic of Tajikistan.

The Hague Convention just helps convolute the issue. By passing and adhering to the current regulations set forth, even more countries, like Tajikistan, end up winning by complicating the process for all American families who wish to adopt internationally. The children are the ones that end up losing and they pay the highest price - their life!

I personally do not support the Hague Convention in its entirety. The concept is great, however, there appear to be many flaws in that document, specifically parts 96 and 98. Many American citizens will not be able to adopt internationally for financial reasons now. The Hague Convention proposals would increase the already expensive process for the Adoption Agencies and the agencies would, therefore, pass those expenses along to the prospective parents. She has made many financial sacrifices in order to begin the process of international adoption. If this is passed, she could potentially lose the money she has invested in a child and have to raise more money (i.e. take out another loan) to accommodate the Hague Convention. So, I am asking you as my representation to make my voice heard among Congress and the Department of State. Please do not support

this until more reasonable guidelines can be created!

I am begging you to help save the international adoption process as well as
thousands of children that need to be rescued!!

Thank you for any assistance that you may provide and for making our voice
heard.

Sincerely,
Traci E. Rodgers